



EDML 394: The Psychology of Learning a Second Language

I Course Objectives

If you expect to successfully teach a second language then it is important to know the main psychological factors that hinder and facilitate its acquisition. If you want to know where your frustrations, worries, fears and anxieties teaching a second language come from, then it is important to understand the underlying psychological processes involved in the dynamics of teaching a second language. This understanding will help you to manage your own feelings and teaching attitudes and therefore the classroom dynamics.

This course presents prospective second language teachers with an overview of the most important psychological factors involved in the second language instructional setting. The course covers issues related to psychological principles of successful English teaching for children, myths and misconceptions about second language learning, psychological aspects of the teacher's relationship to the student and of the student's relationship to the teacher, psychological dynamics in the language learning setting (leadership, evolution and conflicts of the group, etc.) and other important psychological issues.

For Personal and academic doubts, questions... fkcast@hotmail.com

II Class Schedule

III Units

The course is divided into five units. Each unit has mandatory readings. You should accomplish the activities proposed for each reading:

Unit One: What every teacher should know:

- Chuang (2001) Principles of successful English teaching for Children, In *Teaching and Learning English in Kindergartens*, a Doctoral Dissertation.
- “Stages of Second Language Learning: A Fast Understanding paper”. From the course, *The Psychology of Learning a Second Language*.
- McLaughlin (1992) Myths and Misconceptions about Second Language Learning

Unit Two: The Emotional Experience of Learning and Teaching

- Salzberger-Wittenberg et. al. (2004) Aspects of the Student’s relationship to the teacher., In *The Emotional Experience of Learning and Teaching*
- Salzberger-Wittenberg et. al. (2004) Aspects of the Teacher’s relationship to the Student, In *The Emotional Experience of Learning and Teaching*

Unit Three: Who is your Client?

- Maroni (2007) Family Life. In *Understanding your 4-5 year-olds*.
- Maroni (2007) School and the Wider World, In *Understanding your 4-5 year-olds*.
- Maroni (2007) Social Development, In *Understanding your 4-5 year-olds*.
- Corine (2006) A Place in the Family, In *Understanding your 6-7 year-olds*.
- Corine (2006) The Experience of School, In *Understanding your 6-7 year-olds*.
- Corine (2006) Making Friends, In *Understanding your 6-7 year-olds*.

Unit Four: Psychological Dynamics in the Second Language Learning Setting

- Castrillon (2005) *Emotional Dynamics in Organizational Settings*. Power Point Presentation.
- Jesusita Young (1998) Style Wars as a source of Anxiety in Language Classrooms. In *Affect in Foreign Language & Second Language Learning. A Practical Guide to Creating a Low-Anxiety Classroom Atmosphere*.
- Ehrman & Dörnyei (1998) Group Development, In *Interpersonal Dynamics in Second Language Education*.
- Ehrman & Dörnyei (1998) Group Leadership, In *Interpersonal Dynamics in Second Language Education*.
- Salzberger-Wittenberg et. al. (2004) The Student’s feelings at ending, In *The Emotional Experience of Learning and Teaching*
- Salzberger-Wittenberg et. al. (2004) The Teacher’s feelings at ending, In *The Emotional Experience of Learning and Teaching*

Unit Five: Theoretical Basis

- Lightbown & Spada (1999) Theoretical Approaches to explaining second language learning, In *How Languages are Learned?*
- Lightbown & Spada (1999) Factors affecting second language learning, In *How Languages are Learned?*
- Lightbown & Spada (1999) Popular ideas about language learning: Facts and Opinions, In *How Languages are Learned?*
- Bley-Vroman (1988) The Fundamental Character of Foreign Language, In W. Rutherford & M. Sharwood Smith (Eds.), *Grammar and second language teaching: A book of readings* (pp. 19-30). Rowley, MA: Newbury House. Learning.

Additional Resources

- Second Language Anxiety Scales and Questionnaires
- PCRA Long Form: Oral Communication apprehension
- Language Use Strategy Inventory
- Learning Style Survey
- Multiple Intelligences Inventory

IV Schedule

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First Week, Unit One

Introducing ourselves and the course

Activities proposed for Unit One. Readings: a, b, c and Journal Reflection

Second Week, Unit Two

Activities proposed for Unit two (readings 1 and 2) and Journal reflection.

Third Week, Unit Three

Activities proposed for Unit three (readings 3-8) and Journal reflection

Fourth Week, Unit Four

Activities proposed for Unit four (10-14), Power Point Presentation (9) and Journal

- **Fifth Week**

Final essay (including readings 15-18) and class observation.

V Evaluation

Weekly journals: 25% (four journals)

- Students are required to turn in a weekly journal entry (**800 words minimum**). You should connect the reality of teaching a second language to class content. It is desirable to discuss issues related to the class that have not been dealt specifically with. Journals should be given to me on Wednesdays and I will return them to you on Mondays, with comments and grades, so you can gradually understand my way of thinking and evaluating.

Activities proposed for each unit 25%.

- You should accomplish the activities proposed for each unit. Activities must show that you have read and analysed the papers in depth; theoretical disagreements with the readings or other personal/academic viewpoints are welcome.

Evaluation from the senior teacher (15%)

- To be confirmed with the teacher.

Lesson Plan Project (15%)

- In consultation with the senior teacher, students will design a 90 minutes lesson. I will attend the lesson and observe how you teach and interact with children. I would especially pay attention to teaching attitudes described in reading "a".

Final essay (20%, 3000 words minimum)

- In which you should summarize and think of the issues discussed during the practicum, and specifically about all the **psychological factors involved in the**

teaching of a second language, including reflections concerning the theoretical papers of unit number five.

- Additionally you should analyse the psychological factors involved in the emotional dynamics of this practicum; an analysis about our own interactions as members of a group and me as its leader.

VI References

- **Bialystock** (1994) *In other words: The science and psychology of second-language learning*. New York: Basic books.
- **Cohen** (1998) *Strategies in learning and using a second language*. London: Longman.
- **Corine** (2006) *Understanding your 6-7 year-olds*. London: Kingsley
- **Ehrman** (1996) *Understanding Second Language Difficulties*. London: Sage Publications.
- **Ehrman** (1998) *Interpersonal dynamics in second language acquisition. The visible invisible and classroom*. London: Sage Publications.
- **Gass & Selinker** (2001) *Second Language Acquisition. An Introductory Course*. New Jersey: Lawrence Publishers.
- **Lighbown & Spada** (1999) *How Languages are Learned?* New York: Oxford University Press
- **Maroni** (2007) *Understanding your 4-5 year-olds*. London: Kingsley
- **Salzberger-Wittenberg et. al.** (2004) *The Emotional Experience of Learning and Teaching*: London: Karnac
- **Jesusita Young** (1998) *Affect in Foreign Language & Second Language Learning. A Practical Guide to Creating a Low-Anxiety Classroom Atmosphere*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.